

of Orangemen, [and under the control of an inspector who is a prominent member of the same order, the object of the Board becomes quite apparent. My course was dictated solely by a regard for the moral welfare of the 500,000 children committed to my care, and in shaping my actions I much prefer the advice and support of those whose Christian profession and character entitle them to speak on behalf of the religious welfare of the community to the surrender of my convictions through any fear of giving offence to men who, whatever their motives may be, are perpetuating the strifes of the past centuries, and sowing the seeds of intolerance and religious bigotry.

To sum up the whole question in a few words, I would point out again what I stated in my report to the House last winter : 1. That, under the present regulations, the reading of the Sacred Scriptures is not left to the mere discretion of the trustees. Their duty is clearly pointed out in order that there may be no misunderstanding of the responsibility under which they are placed. 2. There is a distinct declaration on the part of the Department that religious instruction is an essential factor in our system of education, and both pupils and teachers have daily presented to them, as a standard by which their conduct is to be regulated, the sublime ethics of the Bible. 3. Where formerly there was often misdirected effort by the reading of selections not suited to the capacities of children, now there is a guarantee that every selection may be profitably read. The order of the lessons is such as to secure variety in matter and style of composition. The historical proportions are so arranged as to preserve the continuity of the narrative, and the selections so copious as to include all, or nearly all, that could be read with profit to young children. The volume consists of 281 lessons, all of which may quite conveniently be read once every year. The child who attends school from the age of five to fifteen will hear the greater portion of the Bible read at least ten times. 4. The non-denominational character of this form of religious instruction is preserved by requiring the teacher to read the lesson for the day without "comment or explanation." This provision I regard as most important. When the most learned, who give a lifetime to the study of the Bible, differ in regard to interpretation, it certainly would not be wise to authorize teachers who have no special training to speak with the authority peculiar to their profession, and perhaps mislead, if not pervert, the minds of their pupils. 5. The conscientious scruples of teachers and pupils are fully protected. The regulations distinctly provide that no teacher is required to read the selections who notifies trustees that he has conscientious objections, and that no pupil need attend upon their reading if forbidden by the parents. 6. Provision is made whereby the clergy of different denominations may, after school hours, give such additional religious instructions as they may deem necessary, and trustees are authorized to shorten the hours of daily study in order to facilitate this object. It must not be forgotten that our Public and High schools are public institutions, maintained for the purpose of developing the highest type of citizenship. While to this end a moral education is indispensable, it would defeat the